

Megan Shaeffer

From: Petit, Lisa <lisa_petit@nps.gov>
Sent: Thursday, June 27, 2019 8:29 AM
To: Megan Shaeffer
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consulting party follow-up

Hi Megan,

Thanks very much for your message. I am forwarding it to our NEPA/106 Compliance Specialist, Bill Hunter, who will be the CVNP point of contact for this environmental review process. Bill will be communicating back to you very soon.

Lisa

Lisa J. Petit, Ph.D.
Acting Deputy Superintendent
Cuyahoga Valley National Park
15610 Vaughn Road
Brecksville, OH 44141
440-546-5970

On Wed, Jun 26, 2019 at 12:22 PM Megan Shaeffer <MShaeffer@summitmetroparks.org> wrote:

Dear Lisa,

I am writing as a follow-up to a consulting party request sent to you in March of this year. The project in question is the proposed removal of the Gorge Dam, located in Gorge Metro Park in Cuyahoga Falls, Summit County, Ohio. The dam is no longer used in electricity generation and is a serious impediment to the river's water quality, thus the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), in cooperation with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), Summit Metro Parks (SMP), the City of Akron and the City of Cuyahoga Falls are considering its removal to improve the ecology of the Cuyahoga River.

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its regulations as codified in 36 CFR 800, a review of historic properties has been underway to assess any potential impacts removal of the dam may have on cultural resources. As part of this process, we invite you to help identify historic properties, assess how this project might affect them, and, should it be necessary, discuss ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any potential adverse effects to historic properties.

In early July of 2019 the history/architecture and archaeological assessments of the cultural resources within the project area will be sent out for a 30-day review by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. At that time we will also send these materials for a 30-day review to tribes and organizations who have indicated they wish to be consulting

parties. If your organization would like to be a consulting party, please let us know by Friday, July 26 so that you can be included in the review process. If you have any initial concerns regarding impacts of this project on known historic, archaeological, or otherwise culturally sensitive properties, please note them in your response.

Project Background and Status

The Gorge Dam was constructed in 1911-1912 by Northern Ohio Traction & Light, the company which later became Ohio Edison. The land around the dam has been part of Summit Metro Parks since 1929. While the dam was originally built to produce both hydroelectric and coal-fired steam power, the hydro operations ceased in 1958 and the coal-fired plant closed in 1991.

Attached is a map of the areas where the project will take place: Gorge Metro Park and Cascade Valley Metro Park. The dam removal project is occurring in multiple phases. At this point, an overall project timeline has not been finalized, but the initiative has seen significant progress in the last several months. Summit Metro Parks and the cooperating agencies have completed Phase I, which measured the quantity and quality of the sediment behind the dam, as well as the estimated cost of managing that sediment and removing the structure. Phase II includes sediment management studies, a hydraulic study, a geologic study and the historic value study. Phase III will consist of sediment removal and management, and in Phase IV the dam will be removed and river restoration will begin.

A public involvement meeting was held on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 in the Cuyahoga Falls Natatorium. At this meeting, an update on Phase II of the project was given as well as a presentation on historical and archaeological sites or features located in the project area.

The information presented at the public involvement meeting is available online at the Great Lakes Mud site: <https://www.greatlakesmud.org/community-involvement4.html>. Additional information about the Gorge Dam removal project such as the "Feasibility Study for the Removal of the Gorge Dam" (Tetra Tech, 2015) is also available on this website.

Questions or comments related to cultural resources may be directed to me at:

Megan Shaeffer, Ph.D.

Cultural Resource Coordinator

Summit Metro Parks

975 Treaty Line Rd.

Akron, Ohio 44313

(330) 865-8057 x225

mshaeffe@summitmetroparks.org

Thank you,

Megan

Megan Shaeffer, Ph.D.

Cultural Resource Coordinator

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